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THE VEDAPARAYANA

IN SRI RAMANASRAMAM

(AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION)

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BANARAS

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PREFACE

The contents of this small book were first published serially in The Mountain Path, a quarterly issued by Sri Ramanasramam from 1968 to 1972. They are now brought out in the form of a book for easy reference.

SRI RAMANSRAMAM
July 1973.

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INTRODUCTION

In Sri Bhagavan's lifetime Vedic chanting or Veda Parayana was held twice a day, morning and evening, lasting about forty minutes on each occasion, and this is still continued. This with the puja which follows it is the only ritual which was or is generally attended at the Ashram. Even for this there was and is no compulsion, although Bhagavan obviously approved of people attending it. It was an hour of tremendous silence when he sat immobile as though carved in rock. He never allowed anything to interrupt it. When asked whether people should learn the meaning, so as to follow it, he said no: it was sufficient that the chanting served as a support for meditation.

Despite this, it is also true, however, that the portions used for chanting were carefully chosen and approved by Sri Bhagavan himself. Technically the Vedas are a well-defined group of scriptures, but not all the passages chanted before Sri Bhagavan are technically Vedas. All of them have the sanctity infused by Sri Bhagavan's presence. All of them are recited in Sanskrit. Nothing has been deleted from them since Sri Bhagavan's lifetime and only one item added. That is Dakshinamurti Stotra which, mainly on the request of the late Major Chadwick (Sadhu Arunachala) is now used as the opening hymn before the evening chant.

Technically, even listening to the chanting of the Vedas is supposed to be made available only to Brahmins, but this prohibition was abrogated by Sri Bhagavan. It is recognised that the word of the Jivan Mukta is more than the scriptures and Bhagavan's word was accepted. Bhagavan's word was

the living Veda, he was the source of the Vedas. He retained only such elements of orthodoxy as he saw to be appropriate. In his presence Brahmins and non-Brahmins, Hindus and Westerners, sat shoulder to shoulder at the chanting. A North Indian visitor once had the temerity to challenge this and Bhagavan answered curtly: "Sit down and attend to your own sadhana," (which might be rendered: "mind your own business").

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THE VEDAPARAYANA

RAMANA CHATVARIMSAT

FORTY VERSES IN PRAISE OF RAMANA

by

KAVYAKANTHA GANAPATI MUNI

1. The world has now found a protector in Ramana, the ocean of compassion who has made the hill of Arunachala his abode, the true story of whose life destroys ignorance; who knows the truth uttered by him (Vishnu) who rides the bird (Garuda); who keeps within himself the secret of the silence of (Dakshinamurti or Siva) the rider of the bull;

2. Who is the Guru of the assembly of learned scholars including the king of the Ganas[1]; who is an ocean of noble qualities; whose great effulgence is hidden by the sheath of the body, like the blazing sun by dense clouds;

3. Who is perfect in the control of the restless senses; who is expert at recognizing the merits of others; who abides in the natural samadhi of silence; who has firmly subdued the fearful lusts;

4. Who eats only when necessary; who performs severe austerities on the slopes of the hill; whose heart is not touched by the arrows (of the god of love) who bears the fish on his banner; who has cultivated the path of knowing the Self;

5. Who has crossed the fearful ocean of samsara; who uses his lotus hands to serve him as a (begging) bowl[2]; who, by his bright and exceedingly refreshing gaze, removes the fear of those who take refuge at his lotus feet;

6. Who is like a treasure to the true devotees who bow down before him; whose presence disperses their great miseries like dust; who maintains the rules (dharma) of ascetics; who dispels ignorance all round;

7. Who is the possessor of virtues enough to be described by the King of the Serpents (Adishesha)[3]; who speaks words which are sweet, true and beneficent; who is neither pleased by honour nor distressed by insults;

8. Who is the king of ascetics; who has destroyed the ego with his steady, bright and keen intellect; who is immersed in the flood of eternal bliss; who has exterminated the inner hordes of enemies (like greed, anger, etc);

9. Who has, through his own abilities, achieved the Supreme Divine state not easily attained; who is free from the sense of 'mine'; who has the welfare of the good at heart; who is cherished in the heart of the Lord of the Ganas (Ganapati);

10. Who abandoned even the lap of the daughter of the mountain (Parvati) in order to remove the ignorance enveloping mankind and who is the piercer of the hill[4] (named Krowncha) in human form.

11. May the Supreme Guru, the ascetic wearing only a loin-cloth, the God who rides the peacock (Kartikeya), come on earth as a man, alone rule the world.

12. Salutations to thee, O Guru who has transcended all qualities, life-long celibate who hast assumed, through maya, the form of a man, slayer of Taraka.[5]

13. Here is no peacock to carry you, no celestial river (the Ganges) for bathing, no nectar of mother's milk from

the breasts of Parvati, no lords of Pramathas[6] with veenas to sing to you. Why, then, O piercer of the Krowncha Hill, have you taken up your abode on the red hill (of Arunagiri)?

14. O Enemy of Taraka, You have only one face, you do not have a place on Uma's (Parvati's) lap, you do not carry the weapon known as Sakti in your hand, you are in human form, there are no celestial armies with flags on either side of you. This disguise is enough to cloud the eyes of the simple, but how can you escape the vigilance of your own brother (Ganapati)?

15. Some worship your lotus feet considering you the foremost among the yogis, some as a great Sage (jnani), others as an ascetic, and others as their Guru; only two or three recognize him who is known as Ramana as the divine Guha[7] sitting on the lap of Uma, born on earth for the welfare of mankind.

16. You expounded the significance of Om (to Brahma) the Lord of Sarasvati (Goddess of learning). Your mouth opened a little to instruct even your father (Siva). You have now, by virtue of your wisdom, come out as the Guru of your elder brother (Ganapati). Though young, O Subrahmanya, you have, by your merits, become greater than all.

17. The throne reserved for the foremost among the Acharyas which was first ascended by Dvaipayana (Veda Vyasa) who had seen the further shore of the Vedas and later by Sankara of high wisdom who dispelled the darkness of ignorance and doubt, now awaits you, incarnate as a man, O Commander of the celestial host.

18. Now, when dharma is at an end, when the three worlds are distressed by evil deeds, when scholars, having

lost sight of Truth, learnedly discuss polemics to no end, and when the very existence of God, the Father, is doubted, who but you, in the guise of man, is the refuge of the good, O Lord, Rider of the Peacock?

19. Dispassion may be valuable for you, but how can you refuse to show mercy? Activity may be a defect for you, but is meditation on the feet of the Father (God) a defect? Desires may be contemptible to you, but is the protection of those who submit contemptible? O Skanda in the disguise of a mortal, are you waiting for some particular occasion?

20. Hence sophistry! O Bull of Dharma, you need no longer limp. Away with bewilderment! May the good flourish everywhere. Our Lord, the son of Bhavani (Parvati), the destroyer of the delusion of Soora's[8] inner eye has now appeared on earth with his brother (Ganapati).

21. O Men, revere this brother of Lambodara[9] in the form of a Guru who, by his power, pervades this body and the entire world and who, though one, manifests as the Self of the multifarious moving beings, having already reached his primary secret Source and destroyed the separateness of the ego.

22. Salutations to Sri Ramana, the Universal Guru, the destroyer of misery, who has reached the eternal state full of light and free from darkness without and within, who removes the ignorance of those who submit to him and who, though seeing the world, exists beyond the world.

23. O Ramana! May your gracious glance be turned just once on me, that I may be blessed.

24. O Ramana! You are the Guru of men. Great is your heart which knows no otherness.

25. Through your teaching, the world, ego and God all appear to me as the one undifferentiated being beyond all doubt.

26. Through your teaching the Existence, which is different from the ego, flows in the form of consciousness not separate from me.

27. We shall realize in our heart the pure (Self) which is subtler than the ego, if we have your grace.

28. O King of Sages! Compassion is not merely a quality of yours but is natural to the effulgent heart which you are.

29. O Sinless one! Your form blazes with pure light. Infinite is your effulgent look.

30. O Lord, your mind has been swallowed by your heart and you shine with eternal bliss.

31. O Chief of those who are self-controlled, you have been made the cook of the Lord of the universe.

32. For you slaughter the egos of these human cattle and cook them as food for the Supreme Siva.

33. I bow down before Bhagavan Ramana who destroys the ignorance in the hearts of human beings not only by his words but also by his compassionate look.

34. Sinking again and again in the ocean of samsara we now clutch at the island of your lotus feet. O Bhagavan Ramana! You are the abode of all auspiciousness. O

Compassionate one, cast your gracious glance upon us, your supplicants.

35. What will be the fate of the babe if the mother does not suckle it? If the cowheard becomes angry how will the cows be protected? If you who are the Acharya of those who seek refuge at your feet do not destroy their doubts how can they who are overcome by countless delusions cross the ocean of samsara?

36. There is perfect peace in your benevolent, gracious smile, great power in the unequalled radiant glance of your clear, steady eyes; you abide always in the lotus of the heart; outwardly you shine like a calm lake; O Bhagavan Ramana, what parallel is there in all the world to your silence?

37. This power in your eyes which dispels the ignorance of your devotees is divine. This beauty in your face like that of the spouse (Lakshmi) of the Lotus-Eyed (Vishnu) is divine. These words which are transcendental and secret are divine. Great Ramana, Acharya of the world, how can a mere mortal praise you?

38. O Ramana, though I am now far away from your feet, a great power acts upon me. Like the blazing light of the sun your power, supreme in all the world, works from a distance, making my mind free from grief.

39. Your blessedness, O Red Hill (Arunachala), derived from the residence of many sages, is now unrivalled, since Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi chose you from many places.

40. This Ramana Maharshi is an ideal held out for men because of his depth of peace, his transcendent power, his wonderful dispassion, his immense mercy, his wisdom which dispels illusion and his gracious conduct.

Ganapati, the son of Narasimha, of the lineage of Vasishta, has thus in these forty verses worshipped briefly the Rishi Ramana, an incarnation of Skanda.

References

[1]In this as well as in a number of the subsequent stanzas the author looks upon himself as an incarnation (avatar) of Ganapati, the elder son of Siva and Parvati, and the Maharshi as an avatar of Ganapati's younger brother Skanda whose two other names are Kartikeya and Subrahmanya. Ganas are celestial beings who wait upon Ganapati, their lord and master.

[2]This refers to a period in the life of Bhagavan when he did indeed beg for food. He used no begging bowl but only accepted as much as he could take in his hands. He never asked but only stood silently in front of a house and accepted what was given. If he was not given anything he just walked on. He never went twice to the same house.

[3]Adisesha, the king of the serpents, upon whose coils Vishnu reposes in the milky ocean, has a thousand heads and therefore a thousand tongues. The idea is that so many tongues are required to describe the Maharshi's qualities.

[4]This refers to Skanda.

[5]This also refers to Skanda.

[6]These are celestial beings who wait upon Siva. The veena is a stringed musical instrument.

[7]This refers to Skanda.

[8]The name of a demon killed by Skanda.

[9]A name of Ganapati.

FIVE STANZAS TO SRI ARUNACHALA

ARUNACHALA PANCHARATNA

1. Ocean of Nectar, Full of Grace, engulfing the universe in Thy Splendour! O Arunachala, the Supreme Itself! be Thou the Sun and open the lotus of my heart in Bliss!

2. O Arunachala! in Thee the picture of the universe is formed, has its stay, and is dissolved; this is the sublime Truth. Thou art the Inner Self, Who dancest in the Heart as 'I.' 'Heart' is Thy name, O Lord!

3. He who turns inward with untroubled mind to search where the consciousness of 'I' arises, realizes the Self, and dissolves in Thee O Arunachala! like a river when it joins the Ocean.

4. Abandoning the outer world, with mind and breath controlled, to meditate on Thee within, the Yogi sees Thy Light, O Arunachala! and finds his delight in Thee.

5. He who dedicates his mind to Thee, and seeing Thee, always beholds the universe as Thy figure, he who at all times glorifies Thee and loves Thee as none other than the Self, he is the master without rival, being one with Thee, O Arunachala! and lost in Thy Bliss.

TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD*

SIKSHA VALLI

Section on Phonetics

May Mitra be propitious to us! May Varuna be propitious to us! May Indra and Brihaspati be propitious to us! May Vishnu of the long strides be propitious to us![1] *I bow down before Vayu. O Vayu I bow down before thee. Thou alone art the manifest Brahman.*[2] *I will proclaim thee the law;* [3] *I will proclaim thee the Truth.*

May That protect me! May That protect the guru.[4] *May That protect me. May That protect the guru. Om, Peace, Peace, Peace.*

We will now expound the science of phonetics—Vocalisation, tone,[5] measure,[6] force,[7] uniformity[8] and continuity.[9] Thus is expounded the section on phonetics.

May glory be on both of us! May the lustre of Brahman illuminate both of us! We will now expound the upanishad[10] of the samhitas,[11] under five heads, that is: the worlds, the luminaries, knowledge, progeny and the atma[12]. These they call the great samhitas.

* We aim at a literal translation, but the mental outlook of the ancients is so different from that of today that explanation is often needed. Some parts, for instance, are mantras in which the actual sound value is of prime importance. Some parts are inconceivably terse and cryptic; where it is stated, for instance, concerning the worlds, the luminaries learning or marriage what is the original form, the evolved form, the fusion and the process (of accomplishing the fusion). This is not an exposition in the modern sense of the word, but rather a reminder of themes for understanding or meditation.

On the other hand, some passages may seem needlessly prolix: for instance, the strange arithmetic listing various degrees of bliss as amounting each of them a hundred times the preceding one. This, of course, is to conjure up the conviction of 'beyond all this' in the mind of the chanter.

First concerning the worlds: earth is the prior form, heaven the subsequent form, akasa[13] their combination and air the process (of combining). Thus concerning the worlds.

Now concerning the luminaries: fire is the prior form, the sun the subsequent form, water their combination, and lightning the process. Thus concerning the luminaries.

Now concerning knowledge: the acharya is the prior form, the disciple the subsequent form, knowledge their combination, and the chanting the process. Thus concerning knowledge.

Now concerning progeny: the mother is the prior form, the father the subsequent form, progeny their combination, and procreation the process. Thus concerning progeny.

Now concerning the being[14]: the lower jaw is the prior form, the upper jaw the subsequent form, speech their combination and the tongue the process. Thus concerning the being.

These are the great samhitas. He who knows[15] these great samhitas as here expounded is endowed with progeny, cattle, the Light of Brahman, food and the heavenly world.[16]

May Indra who is the lord of the Vedas,[17] who possesses innumerable forms, who has arisen from the immortal Vedas, endow me with wisdom. O Lord! may I possess immortality. May my body be fit![18] May my tongue be honeyed! May I hear well with my ears! Thou art the sheath of Brahman concealed by intelligence.[19] Safeguard for me what I have learned.

Sri[20] ever provides me amply and promptly with raiment, cattle, food and drink; therefore bring her to me with wool-bearing animals for which I here offer oblation in the fire. Svaha![21]

May Brahmacharins[22] come to me, Svaha!

May Brahmacharins come to me quietly, Svaha!

May Brahmacharins come to me from all sides, Svaha!

May self-controlled Brahmacharins come to me, Svaha!

May Brahmacharins of controlled mind come to me, Svaha!

May I be renowned among men, Svaha!

May I be respected among the wealthy, Svaha!

O Lord, may I enter into Thee, Svaha!

O Lord, enter into me, Svaha!

In Thee who hast a thousand branches may I be cleansed, O Lord, Svaha!

As waters flow downwards, as months to the year, O World-Sustainer,[23] may Brahmacharins come to me from all sides, Svaha!

Thou art the refuge; enlighten me; absorb me in Thee!

Bhu, Bhuva, Suva: these are three sacred utterances.[24] Besides these the Son of Mahachama taught the fourth. That is Maha, That is Brahman, That is the Atman. The other gods are its members.

Bhu is this world, bhuva the inter-world, suva the upper world, and Maha the sun. All the worlds are made glorious by the sun.

Bhu is agni,[25] bhuva is vayu,[26] suva is the sun and maha the moon. All the luminaries are made glorious by the moon.[27]

Bhu is (denotes) the mantras,[28] bhuva the samans,[29] suva the yajus[30] and Maha is Brahman. All the Vedas are made glorious by Brahman.

Bhu is prana,[31] bhuva apana,[32] suva vyana[33] and Maha is annam.[34] All the pranas are made glorious by food.

These are the four vyahritis each comprising four and becoming fourfold. He who knows them knows Brahman. To him all the gods bring homage.

There is this akasa (consciousness, *lit* space or ether or sky) within the heart. In that there is this purusha (person) of the form of consciousness, immortal and golden (resplendent). What hangs down like breasts beyond the palate, is the source of Indra where the roots of the hairs part (on the head) and split the skull. (The meditator makes, at the time of his final departure, his exit from the body through that passage) and abides in fire uttering to himself Bhu; he stays in the air saying Bhuva, in the sun saying Suva and in Brahman saying Maha. He attains sovereignty. He becomes the Lord of Mind, the Lord of Speech and the Lord of Sight, the Lord of Hearing and the Lord of Understanding. Thereafter he becomes this Brahman whose body is the akasa, whose essence is Truth, whose sport is the prana (life-force), who is the joy in the mind, and who is full of eternal peace. O Pracheenayogya, meditate in this manner.

The earth, the heavens, the space between them, the (four) quarters and the directions between them; fire, air, the sun, the moon and the stars; the waters, the herbs, the lordly trees of the forest, the sky and the body—thus the material world outside. Now for the body: the Prana, the Vyana, the Apana, the Udana and the Samana; the eye, the ear, the mind, the speech and the sense of touch; the skin, the flesh, the muscle, the bone and the marrow. A rishi classified in this manner and said; " All these are groups of fives. One group of five is nourished (supported) by another group of five."

Om is Brahman, Om is all this. It is well known that Om is the word of assent. By saying "Om recite" they (the priests) proceed to recite. After saying Om they chant the samans. After saying Om shom they recite the sastras (invocations). The adhvaryu (the priest who offers the oblations) responds (to the hotr the priest who chants the rks) with the syllable Om. The Brahma (the priest who watches over the entire sacrifice) initiates (the sacrifice) by saying Om. By saying Om assent is given for the performance of the Agnihotra (a form of fire sacrifice). A Brahmana, before reciting "Let me truly attain Brahman", says Om. He truly attains Brahman.

(The following discipline is necessary):— (Abiding by) the eternal law (rtam) and studying and teaching the scripture; (abiding by) truth and studying and teaching the scriptures; austerities (tapas) and studying and teaching the scriptures; control of the senses and studying and teaching the scriptures; control of the mind and studying and teaching the scriptures; tending the sacrificial fires and studying and teaching the scriptures; offerings in the fire (agnihotra) and studying and teaching the scriptures; entertaining guests and studying and teaching the scriptures; social welfare and studying and teaching the scriptures; setting up a family and studying and teaching the scriptures; procreation and studying and teaching the scriptures; ensuring the birth of grandchildren and studying and teaching the scriptures. Rathithara of the truthful words said that truth (was the most important discipline). Paurushishti established in tapas said that tapas (is what is essential). Naka belonging to the lineage of Mudgala said that studying and teaching the scriptures alone (is necessary). That alone is tapas. That alone is tapas.

"I am the power which makes the tree (of samsara) grow. (My) glory is (high) like the top of a mountain. I

am the extremely pure, immortal being as he is seen in the sun. I am the wealth of lustre. Endowed with good intellect I am imperishable and changeless". This is what Trishanku said after he became enlightened.

After teaching the Vedas the Acharya (the teacher) impresses upon the pupil thus: Speak the truth. Follow the dharma. Do not be careless about the study of the scriptures. Give the Acharya the fee that will please him. See that the line of your race is not broken. Do not be careless about truth. Do not be careless about dharma. Do not be careless about your welfare. Do not be careless about your prosperity. Do not be careless about studying and teaching the scripture. Do not be careless about your duties to the gods and the spirits of your forefathers. Let your mother be a god(dess) to you. Let your father be a god to you. Let your Acharya be a god to you. Let your guest be a god to you. Acts which are irreproachable are to be performed not others. The virtues found in us are to be practised by you, not others. Those Brahmanas who are superior to us are to be honoured by you with a seat. (Gifts must be) offered with reverence. (They should not be) offered without reverence. (They should be) offered generously. (They should be) offered with modesty. (They should be) offered with a sense of fear. (They should be) offered with sympathy. If you should have any doubts regarding your course of action or conduct, you should follow the Brahmanas who are on the spot, who are able to judge carefully, who are experienced, independent, not harsh and lovers of dharma. Just as they act in such circumstances you must also act. And now in the matter of those who are falsely accused (of some crime) you should follow the Brahmanas who are on the spot, who are able to judge carefully, who are experienced, independent, not harsh and lovers of dharma. Just as they act towards them (the accused) you must also

act towards them. This is the Vedic injunction. This is the instruction. This is the Upanishad(secret) of the Vedas. Thus must one guide one's life. This is the only way of guiding one's life.

May Mitra be propitious to us. May Varuna be propitious to us. May Aryman be propitious to us. May Indra and Brihaspati be propitious to us. I bow down before Brahman. O Vayu, I bow down before Thee. Thou alone art the manifest Brahman. I have proclaimed Thee the manifest Brahman. I have proclaimed Thee the law. I have proclaimed thee the Truth. That has protected me. That has protected the Guru. That has protected me. That has protected the Guru.

OM PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!

References

[1]This refers to the myth of Bali who acquired powers over heaven and earth. Vishnu appeared before him as a dwarf and begged him for as much land as he could cover in three strides. The boon was granted and the dwarf then grew to such immensity that he covered heaven and earth in his first two strides and for the third had no place left to set his foot except on Bali's head. A myth of the humbling of the ego once it grants a foothold to God.

[2]Air or wind is taken as the symbol or manifestation of Spirit.

[3]The word translated 'law' is 'rtam' from which the words 'rite' and 'ritual' come. It has much the same meaning in Vedic Sanskrit as 'dharma' has in later texts.

[4]Literally 'the speaker' or 'chanter' (of the scriptures) but the meaning is the 'guru'.

[5]Various distinct tones or pitches are used in reciting Vedic mantrams, as in a tonal language.

[6]Measure or quantity in the sense of short, long and still longer vowels.

[7]Stress or emphasis.

[8]Evenness of pronunciation.

[9]Combinations of sounds.

[10]The word 'upanishad' means literally 'sitting together'; here it can be understood as the 'secret' or 'meditation'.

[11]The collections of Vedic hymns are called *samhita*. Here it means 'combinations'.

[12]Atma means the 'self' in the sense of the 'being'; here it is rather the physical being.

[13]Akasa can mean 'ether' or 'space'.

[14]atma.

[15]i.e., meditates upon.

[16]i.e. *Svarga*.

[17]Literally 'the bull among the Vedas'.

[18]The body and its faculties are required for full development.

[19]Divine power and knowledge sprung from the Vedas is still only the sheath enclosing the Formless Absolute of Brahman.

[20]Sri is equivalent to Lakshmi, the spouse of Vishnu and Goddess of Prosperity.

[21]There is no dictionary meaning of the Vedic cry Svaha. It is somewhat akin to the Biblical 'So be it' or 'Amen'.

[22]Celibate students. The practiser is now a qualified guru appealing for disciples.

[23]In Sanskrit *Dhata*.

[24]*Vyahriti*.

[25]fire.

[26]air.

[27]Here the viewpoint is changed. It will be seen in what follows that there are four sacred utterances, each to be meditated upon in four different ways. Thus they make up the sixteen kalas or parts of the Purusha. All this is to be regarded as indications for meditation, not as an exposition of theory.

[28]The riks or verses of the Rig-Veda.

[29]The chants of the Sama-Veda.

[30]The liturgical portions of the Yajur-Veda.

[31]The vital force which rises in the body.

[32]The vital force which descends.

[33]The vital force which pervades the body.

[34]Food.

ANANDA VALLI

Section Dealing with Bliss

May (Brahman) protect both of us (the Guru and the disciple). May (Brahman) sustain us. May we work together intensely. May our study be illuminating. Let us not bear ill will towards each other. Om Peace, Peace, Peace.

He who knows Brahman attains the Supreme (state). This has been stated clearly by the following saying: "Brahman is Being, Consciousness and Infinite. He who knows (realizes) that it exists within the cave (heart or intellect), in the highest ether (the Unmanifest), enjoys all his desires along with the omniscient Brahman."

From that (Brahman) or from this Self (Atman) ether (*akasa*) came into existence; from ether air, from air fire, from fire water, from water the earth, from the earth herbs, from herbs food and from food man. He is indeed this man consisting of the essence of food (*annarasamaya*). This indeed is his head. This is his right wing (side). This is his left wing. This is his trunk. This is the tail (the nether limbs) forming his support. There is also this stanza (explaining it):

"From food are born all beings, those that depend upon the earth. They live on food and into food they enter when they die. Hence it is regarded as the universal (the most important) medicament (*aushadha*). Those who meditate on food as Brahman truly obtain all the food. For food is the first among created things. Hence it is called the universal medicament. All beings are born of food. Having been born they grow on food. It (food) eats, and is eaten by, beings. Therefore it is called *Annam*."

Different from this (body) consisting of the essence of food (*annarasamaya*) is the body consisting of the life forces

(*pranamaya*). By this that (*annarasamaya*) is filled. This (*pranamaya*) is (also) regarded as having the form of a man. it is imagined in the form of a man on the analogy of the other (*annarasamaya*). *Prana* is indeed his head. *Vyana* is his right wing. *Apana* is his left wing. *Akasa* (ether) is his trunk. *Prithvi* (earth) is the tail which supports him. There is also the following stanza about it:

"The Devas breathe (live) because of *Prana*; also men and animals. *Prana* is truly the life-span (*ayuh*) of beings. Therefore it is spoken of as the universal life-span. Those who meditate on *Prana* as Brahman attain (live) the full span of life. *Prana* is the life-span of beings and is therefore called the universal life-span (*sarvayusham*). This (*pranamaya*) is truly the inner self of that which was mentioned earlier (*annarasamaya*). Different from this *pranamaya* is another body consisting of the mind (*manomaya*). By this that (*pranamaya*) is filled. This is (also) regarded as having the form of a man. It is imagined in the form of a man on the analogy of the other. *Yajus* is his head. *Rk* is the right wing. *Saman* is his left wing. *Adesa* (Vedic injunctions) forms his trunk. The (hymns) of the (sage) Atharva Angirasa form the tail which supports him." There is also the following stanza about it:

"He who knows the bliss of Brahman from which speech turns back along with mind, unable to reach it, does not fear at any time."

This is truly the inner self of that which was mentioned earlier (*pranamaya*). Different from that which consists of mind (*manomaya*) there is another body which consists of intelligence (*vijnanamaya*). By this that (*manomaya*) is filled. This is (also) regarded as having the form of a man. It is imagined in the form of a man on the analogy of the other. *Sraddha* (reverence for the Guru and the scriptures) is his

head. *Rtam* (eternal law of the universe) is his right wing. *Satyam* (Truth) is his left wing. *Yoga* is his trunk. *Mahat* (the Unmanifest) is the tail which supports him. Regarding this also there is the following stanza:

"*Vijnanam* (intelligence or understanding) offers sacrifice. It also performs the various *karmas* (religious rites). All the Devas meditate on *vijnanam* as Brahman, the eldest (and the most important). If one meditates upon *vijnanam* as Brahman and does not swerve from it he leaves aside in the body his sins and fully enjoys all (his) desires."

This (*vijnanamaya*) is the inner self of that which was mentioned earlier (*manomaya*). Different from this (*vijnanamaya*) there is another body consisting of bliss (*anandamaya*). By this that (*vijnanamaya*) is filled. This one is (also) regarded as having the form of man. It is imagined in the form of a man on the analogy of the other. *Priya* (love) is his head. *Moda* (joy) is his right wing. *Pramoda* (delight) is his left wing. Bliss is his trunk. Brahman is the tail which support him. About this there is (also) the following stanza:

"If a person thinks that Brahman is non-existent he truly becomes non-existent (a non-entity). If he knows that Brahman exists he will be known (by the wise) as existent (one who has realized Brahman)." This (*anandamaya*) is the inner self of that which was mentioned earlier (*vijnanamaya*).

Now these questions arise: "Does one who has not known (Brahman) experience (Brahman) on leaving this world? Does one who has known (Brahman) experience (Brahman) on leaving this world?"

He (Brahman or Self) desired: "May I be born as many." He performed *tapas* (thought intensely). Having

thought intensely he created all this—whatever is here(in the world). After creating it he entered into it. After entering into it be became the Being (*sat*) and the Beyond (*tyat*). He became that which can be defined and that which cannot be defined, that which has a basis and that which has no basis, the sentient and the inert, the real (*satyam*) and the unreal (*anrtam*). He became the real. Whatever exists is called the real (*satyam*). There is (also) this stanza about it.

"In the beginning this was indeed non-existent. From it there arose existence. It made itself by itself. Therefore it is called the well-made. That which is well-made is *rasa* (joy, bliss). Obtaining this joy one becomes blissful. Who, indeed, could breathe in or breathe out if this bliss were not in the *akasa* (ether)? Indeed it is this alone that produces bliss. When one finds a support in this invisible, bodiless, indescribable, abodeless (state) he reaches the state of fearlessness. When one makes even the slightest distinction in it he is subject to fear. That itself is the cause of fear to the learned person who does not think deeply." There is also this stanza about it:

"For fear of It (Brahman)the wind blows, for fear of It the Sun rises, for fear of It Agni and Indra and Death, the fifth, run (to do their allotted work)"

Now this is an enquiry into the nature of bliss (*ananda*): Let it be supposed that there is a youth, a good and learned youth full of desires (ambitions), resolute and strong, and that to him belongs this entire earth full of riches. That is one unit of human joy. One hundred of these units of human joy make a unit of joy of Manushya Gandharvas (men who have acquired supernatural powers). One who is learned in the Vedas and is not smitten by desires also (possesses the same joy). One hundred such units of joy of Manushya

Gandharvas constitute one unit of joy of Deva Gandharvas (celestial beings). It is also the joy of one who is learned in the Vedas and is not smitten by desires. One hundred units of joy of the Deva Gandharvas constitute one unit of joy of the Pitris (manes) who inhabit the long-lasting world. It is also the joy of one who is learned in the Vedas and is not smitten by desires. One hundred units of joy of the Pitris who inhabit the long-lasting world constitute one unit of joy of the Devas who are Ajanajas (those who are born in the world of the celestials). It is also the joy of one who is learned in the Vedas and is not smitten by desires. One hundred units of joy of the Devas who are Ajanajas constitute one unit of joy of Karma Devas, those who have become Devas by virtue of their karma (action). It is also the joy of one who is learned in the Vedas and is not smitten by desires. One hundred units of joy of Karma Devas constitute one unit of joy of Devas. It is also the joy of one who is learned in the Vedas and is not smitten by desires. One hundred units of joy of the Devas constitute one unit of joy of Indra. It is also the joy of one who is learned in the Vedas and is not smitten by desires. One hundred units of joy of Indra constitute one unit of joy of Brihaspati. It is also the joy of one who is learned in the Vedas and is not smitten by desires. One hundred units of joy of Brihaspati constitute one unit of joy of Prajapati. It is also the joy of one who is learned in the Vedas and is not smitten by desires. One hundred units of joy of Prajapati constitute one unit of joy of Brahman. It is also the joy of one who is learned in the Vedas and is not smitten by desires.

He who is in this man and he who is in the Sun are one and the same. He who knows this transcends, on departing from this world, the self which is *annamaya*, transcends the self which is *pranamaya*, transcends the self which is *mano-*

maya, transcends the self which is *vijnanamaya*, transcends the self which is *anandamaya*. There is also this stanza about it:

" He who knows the bliss of Brahman from which speech turns back along with mind, unable to reach it, experiences no fear from any source. The (thoughts) ' why did I not do good? Why did I do evil?' do not torment him." He who knows this regards these two as his Self. These two truly fortify the Self of him who knows this. This is the secret (*Upanishad*).

May (Brahman) protect both of us. May (Brahman) sustain both of us. May we work together intensely. May our study be illuminating. Let us not bear ill will towards each other.

OM PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!

BHRIGU VALLI

Section dealing with Bhrigu

May (Brahman) protect both of us. May (Brahman) sustain both of us. May we work together intensely. May our study be illuminating. Let us not bear illwill towards each other. Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

The celebrated Bhrigu, son of Varuna, approached his father Varuna saying: "Revered Sir, please tell me about Brahman". The (father) told him "Food, the vital forces (prana), the eyes, the ears, the mind and speech". He added: "That from which these beings are born, that by which those that are born live, that into which they completely go back on departing (from this world), try to know that. That is Brahman."

He (Bhrigu) practised austerities (*tapas*; deep and intense thinking). After practising *tapas* he came to the conclusion that food was Brahman. For (he thought that) all these beings were really born of food, that those that were born lived on food and that they completely went back to food on departing (from this world). Having realized this he (again) approached his father Varuna saying; "Revered Sir, tell me about Brahman." The (father again) said to him; "Seek to know Brahman through *tapas*; *tapas* is Brahman."

He (again) practised *tapas* and, having practised *tapas*, came to the conclusion that the vital forces were Brahman. For (he thought that) all these beings were really born of the vital forces; that those that were born lived by the vital forces and that they completely went back to the vital forces on departing (from his world). Having realized this he again

approached his father Varuna saying: "Revered Sir, please tell me about Brahman." (The father again) said to him: "Try to know Brahman through *tapas*; *tapas* is Brahman."

He (again) practised *tapas* and, having practised *tapas*, came to the conclusion that mind (*manas*) was Brahman. For (he thought that) all these were really born of mind, that those that were born lived by mind and that they completely went back into mind on departing (from this world). Having realized this he again approached his father Varuna saying: "Revered Sir, please tell me about Brahman." (The father again) said to him: "Try to know Brahman through *tapas*; *tapas* is Brahman."

He (again) practised *tapas* and, having practised *tapas*, came to the conclusion that the intellect (*vijnanam*) was Brahman. For (he thought that) all these beings were really born of the intellect, that those that were born lived by the intellect and that they completely went back to the intellect on departing (from this world). Having realized this he again approached his father Varuna saying: "Revered Sir, please tell me about Brahman." (The father again) said to him: "Try to know Brahman through *tapas*; *tapas* is Brahman."

He (again) practised *tapas* and, having practised *tapas* came to the conclusion that bliss is Brahman. For (he thought that) all these beings are really born of bliss, that those that are born live by bliss and that they completely go back to bliss on departing (from this world). This is the esoteric knowledge (*vidya*) of Bhrigu son of Varuna. It is established in the highest *vyoman* (ether or space; Brahman). He who knows this is firmly established. He becomes the possessor of food as well as the eater of food. He becomes great by virtue of his progeny, cattle and the lustre of his spiritual knowledge. He becomes very famous.

Food should not be despised. This should be observed as a vow (pious resolution). *Prana* indeed is food. The body is the eater of food. The body is established on *Prana*, *Prana* is established on the body. Therefore food is established on food. He who knows this food which is established on food is firmly established. He becomes the possessor of food as well as the eater of food. He becomes great by virtue of his progeny, cattle and the lustre of his spiritual knowledge. He becomes very famous.

Food should not be wasted. This should be observed as a vow. Water, indeed, is food. Fire (lit, effulgence; *jyoti*) is the eater of food. Fire is established on water; water is established on fire. Therefore food is established on food. He who knows this food which is established on food becomes firmly established. He becomes the possessor of food as well as the eater of food. He becomes great by virtue of his progeny, cattle and the lustre of his spiritual knowledge. He becomes very famous.

Food should be kept in abundance. This should be observed as a vow. The earth, indeed, is food. *Akasa* (space) is the eater of food. Space is established on the earth; the earth is established on space. Therefore food is established on food. He who knows this food which is established on food becomes firmly established. He becomes the possessor of food as well as the eater of food. He becomes great by virtue of his progeny, cattle and the lustre of his spiritual knowledge. He becomes very famous.

One should not turn away anybody who comes to his house. This should be observed as a vow. Therefore plenty of food should be obtained (and stored) by some means or other. "The food has been prepared", says (the host). If the food is prepared with great care it will be prepared (for the host also elsewhere) with great care. If the food is pre-

pared with middling care it will be prepared (for the host also elsewhere) with middling care. If the food is prepared with little care it will be prepared (for the host also elsewhere) with little care. He who knows this (obtains the benefits mentioned above).

Brahman is to be meditated upon as safety (*kshema*) in speech, as the acquisition and preservation of wealth (*yoga kshema*) in *prana* and *apana*, in the form of relief in the anus. These are the methods of meditation in respect of the body. Now in regard to what is divine. (Brahman is to be meditated upon as) contentment in rain, as force (or strength) in lightning, as fame in cattle, as lustre in the stars, as the imperishable bliss of progeny in the generative organ and as everything (all) in space (*akasa*). If one meditates upon it as support he obtains support. If one meditates upon it as great (*maha*) he becomes great. If one meditates upon it as mind (*manah*) he acquires the power of thinking. If one meditates upon it as obeisance (*namah*) all desires bow down before him. If one meditates upon it as Brahma (the Vedas) he becomes the knower of the Vedas. If one meditates upon it as the destructive power of Brahma (*Brahmanah parimarah*) his enemies and rivals die around him.

He who is in this man and he who is in the Sun are one. One who knows this transcends the body of food (*annamaya atma*), transcends the body of vital forces (*pranamaya atma*), transcends the body of mind (*manomaya atma*), transcends the body of the intellect (*vijnanamaya atma*), transcends the body of bliss (*anandamaya atma*) and wanders about this world eating what he likes and wearing what he likes, singing this *saman* (song): "Ha! Uha! Uha! U! I am the food, I am the food, I am the food. I am the eater of food, I am the eater of food, I am the eater of food. I am the one who puts everything together (creates), I am the one who puts every

thing together, I am the one who puts everything together. I was born of *Rta* (the eternal law of the universe) even before the gods. I am the centre (*nabhi*) of immortality. He who gives me away saves me thereby. I am the food and I eat the eater of food. I overcome the entire world. My splendour is equal to that of the Sun."

May (Brahman) protect both of us. May It sustain both of us. Let us work together intensely. May our studies be illuminating. Let us not bear illwill towards each other.

OM PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!

SRI SOOKTAM

Hymn to Sri or the Goddess of Prosperity

1. O Jataveda (Agni, Fire-god)! Bring unto me Lakshmi who resembles a doe of golden colour, who is adorned with garlands of silver and gold, delightful like the moon and abounding in riches.

2. O Jataveda! Bring unto me that Lakshmi who will not desert me so that I may obtain the gold, cows, horses and followers bestowed by her.

3. I invoke that Goddess of Prosperity who comes with horses in front and chariots in the middle and whose coming is announced by the trumpeting of elephants. May that Goddess of Prosperity come and bless me.

4. I invoke that Goddess of Prosperity whose nature is bliss, who wears a gentle smile, who is surrounded by gold on all sides, who is extremely benignant, lustrous and always contented. She makes (those who worship her) contented and is of the colour of a lotus and seated on a lotus.

5. I seek refuge (at the feet of) the Goddess of Prosperity who is bright as the moon, whose fame blazes like a fire in the world, who is adorned by the Devas and who is extremely generous. May my poverty disappear. I invoke Thee again.

6. O Goddess who art bright as the sun! That noble tree of Thine known as *bilva* came into existence as a result of Thy austerities (tapas). May its fruits destroy my impurities of mind and outer features of poverty with Thy grace.

7. May the friend of the Devas (Kubera, the Lord of Wealth who is a friend of Mahadeva or Siva) come to me with

fame and wealth (*lit.* jewels). May he grant me who am living in this kingdom, fame and riches!

8. I shall (by Thy grace) destroy that distressing poverty, the first born in the form of hunger and thirst, (i.e. which prevents the advent of prosperity). Dispel from my house every form of want and insufficiency.

9. I invoke that Goddess of Prosperity, the controller of all beings, who is known by her fragrance, who is invincible, who is always full of wealth and fertility.

10. O Goddess of Prosperity! May we obtain the desires of our heart, our longings for food and milk products, and may we utter only truthful words. Let us attain glory.

11. O Kardama! Make her who was born to Kardama (i.e. to you) abide with me. Make the Goddess of Prosperity who is the mother (of the universe) and wears garlands of lotuses, dwell in our family.

12. Let the waters produce oily products (like butter) in my house. O Chiklita, dwell in my house and make the Goddess of Prosperity, the Divine Mother, also dwell in my family.

13. O Jataveda! Bring to me the extremely benign Lakshmi (another name for the goddess of Prosperity), reddish in complexion, who dwells in lakes and who possesses the moon's brilliance and gold in abundance.

14. O Jataveda! Bring to me the extremely benign Lakshmi of a golden complexion who dwells in lakes, who is the bestower of plenty, who wears a garland of gold, who is resplendent like the sun and abounds in wealth.

15. O Jataveda! Bring to me that Lakshmi who will not forsake me and by whose grace I may obtain in plenty, gold, cows, women servants, horses and men servants.

16. He who is desirous of becoming prosperous should, after making himself pure and controlling his senses, make daily offerings of melted butter (in the fire). He should also repeat always the above fifteen stanzas.

17. O Thou whose face is like a lotus, whose thighs resemble the lotus, whose eyes are like a lotus and who is born of a lotus! Bless me. O Goddess with lotus eyes, so that I may attain happiness.

18. Thou who art extremely rich givest horses, givest cows, givest riches. May riches come to me O Goddess, who grantest all prayers.

19. O Mother of all beings, grant me sons, grandsons, wealth, grains, elephants, horses, goats, sheep, cows, chariots and long life.

20. We meditate upon Lakshmi, the supreme Goddess, the controller of all, brilliant as the sun and moon and fire.

21. By your grace may Agni grant us riches, may Vayu (the wind-god) grant us riches, may Surya (the sun god) grant us riches, may the Vasus grant us riches, may Indra and Brihaspati grant us riches, may Varuna grant us riches.

22. O Vainateya, drink the soma. Let the Destroyer of Vritra (Indra) drink the soma. Let the (other) gods who drink soma grant me riches (required for conducting) the soma (sacrifice).

23. The devotees (of the Goddess of Prosperity) who have earned religious merit are not affected by anger, envy, avarice or evil thoughts.

24. O Night covering the light, May the lightnings of the cloud in thy Heaven pour down! Let all seeds grow! Protect! Kill the Brahman-haters.

25. O Goddess who art fond of lotus, who belongest to the highest order of women known as Padminis, who holdest a lotus in Thy hand, who art seated on a lotus, whose eyes resemble the petals of a lotus, who art loved by the whole world and who pleases the minds of all beings! Be pleased to place Thy lotus feet upon me.

26. May that Lakshmi born of a lotus and seated on a lotus, with full hips, eyes like the petals of a lotus, deep and round navel, bent with the fullness of her breasts, wearing bright upper and lower garments, bathed every day with water in golden and bejewelled pots by celestial elephants, with a lotus in her hand, ever dwell in my house with all auspicious qualities.

27. I worship Lakshmi, the daughter of the ocean of milk, the queen of Sriranga, whom all the celestial damsels serve, the sole seed and sprout (source) of the world, whose slightest look has endowed Brahma, Indra and the god who wears Ganga (Siva) with the powers they now possess, the mother of the three worlds, she who was born of a lotus and is the consort of Mukunda (Vishnu).

28. May Lakshmi the possessor of Siddhis (supernatural powers), Lakshmi, the bestower of liberation, Lakshmi who grants victory and is known as Saraswati, Lakshmi the Goddess of Prosperity, Lakshmi the granter of boons, be always gracious to me.

29. I worship the Goddess of the world who holds in her hands the noble *ankusa* (a weapon generally used by elephant-drivers) and a rope, whose hand has the pose of protection

against fear, who is seated on a lotus, who is lustrous like ten million rising suns and who is the primal being.

30. Obeisance to Thee, O Goddess Narayani, Tryambika, who art the abode of all auspicious qualities, who art auspiciousness itself, who fulfillests all the desires (of her devotees), who art the only refuge of every one.

31. We shall try to know the great Goddess. We shall meditate on the consort of Vishnu. May Lakshmi guide us!

32. May the Goddess of Prosperity grant me, her devotee, lustrous looks, longevity, good health, grains, wealth, cattle, many sons and a long life of a hundred years.

MAHANARAYANA UPANISHAD[1]

Finer than the fine, vaster than the vast, the self hides in the secret heart of the creature; when man is weaned from sorrow, purified in mind, then he beholds Him through Grace; he sees the greatness of the Self-being.

The seven pranas (breaths) are born from Him and the seven flames and kinds of fuel and the seven tongues and these seven worlds in which move the life-breaths set within with the secret heart for their dwelling place—, seven and seven.

From Him arise the oceans and all these mountains and from Him flow rivers of all forms, and from Him are all plants and essences; united with these the individual Soul dwells in creatures abiding in the subtle body.

Among Gods the Creator, among composers the Master of words, among the wise the Sage, among animals the Buffalo, among birds the Hawk, among tools the Axe, among the sacrifices the Soma, He transcends the purifying agencies with the help of Sound (Holy Chant).

One Unborn, red, white and black of hue, She begets profuse progeny in her likeness; taking delight in her, one unborn lies by her (jivas who are attached), the other unborn puts her away having taken the enjoyment (those who are not attached).

Lo, the Sun whose dwelling is in the clear sky, He is the Vasu in the inter-regions, the fire of the sacrificial altar, and the Guest of the domestic hearth; He shines in man and in the Gods as the Soul and His name is the law. He is all that is

[1]This is the concluding portion of the Vedaparayana chanted at the Shrine of Bhagavan in the morning. This portion consists mostly of riks taken from the various sections of the Rigveda. Many of these riks may appear to be obscure. There are not many who can explain the symbolism that they are replete with.

born of water and all that is born of earth and all that is born on the mountains. He is the Supreme Truth and He is the Mighty One.

Born of Him they are not other. There was nothing other than Him who entered all the worlds of His creation as their inmost Self. The Lord of creatures is one with the creature. He identifies Himself with the three luminaries imparting lustre to them, He is of sixteen parts.

We call the manifold sustainer, who gives us wealth in plenty, the Creator-Sun of divine vision.

I pour clarified butter into the consecrated Fire; for this is his native lair, he is lodged in the light, the light is his plane. According to Thy Self-nature, bring the Gods and fill them with rapture. O Male of the herd, carry to them our offering made with the utterance of *swaha*.

From the Supreme Fount vast as the Ocean rose up the Universe like waves of honey yielding delight to creatures, that turned to immortality by mystic brooding. The secret Name of the Lustre is the tongue of the Gods, the navel of immortality.

May we repeat ever the Name luminous, bear it in the sacrifice with obeisances; May the Creator hear our laud from near. The white four-horned One has revealed it.

Four are His horns, three His feet, heads two, arms seven; bound triply the Bull roars, the mighty God has entered into the mortals.

Laid three-fold, secretly held in the cave, the Light was discovered by the gods. Indra formed one, the visible world, Surya another, the world of dream; from Vena came the third, the world of dreamless sleep.

He who is the first among the Gods before and above all, Rudra, the great Seer, behold him of the Golden Embryo being born before all. May He the God link us with the auspicious Knowledge.

Him beyond whom there is nothing higher, than whom there is none smaller, none greater, alone who stands immutable like a tree established in heaven, by Him, the Purusha, all this is pervaded.

Not by ritual, not by progeny, not by wealth, but by abandonment did some attain to Immortality. That which renouncers attain is laid beyond the heaven, yet it shines resplendent in the heart-cave.

Ascetics who have made sure of the inner meaning of the whole knowledge of Vedanta, purified by the yoga of renunciation, all in the hour of their bodily dissolution, passing beyond death, are released into the world of Brahman.

Small, free from evil, dwelling of the Supreme, is the pure Lotus of the heart that is at the centre of the citadel (of the human body). Even there in that smallness is the sorrowless ether; what is within it that is to be meditated upon.

He that is beyond the Sound that is uttered at the beginning of the Veda, that is established in the Upanishads, and which is dissolved in the primal cause, is the Supreme Lord.

DAKSHINAMURTI ASHTAKAM[1]

(Hymn to Dakshinamurti)

Invocation

That Shankara who appeared as Dakshninamurti to grant peace to the great Ascetics (Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanat Kumara and Sanat Sujata), who revealed his real state of Silence, and who has expressed the real nature of the Self in this Hymn abides in me.

The Hymn

He who teaches through silence the nature of the supreme Brahman, who is a youth, who is the most eminent Guru surrounded by the most competent disciples that remain steadfast in Brahman, who has the *mudra* indicating illumination,[2] who is of the nature of bliss, who revels in the Self, who has a benign countenance—that Father[3] who has a southward-facing form,[4] we adore.

To Him, who, by Maya, as by dream, sees within himself the universe which is inside him, like a city that appears in a mirror, (but) which is manifested as if externally, to one who apprehends, at the time of awakening, his own single Self, to him, the primal Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him who like a magician or even like a great yogi displays, by his own power, this universe which at the beginning is undifferentiated, under the varied conditions of space, time and karma and posited by Maya: to Him, the Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him, whose luminosity alone, which is of the nature of existence, shines forth, energising the objective world which

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[1]This is the opening hymn of the evening chant.

is like non-existent; to Him who instructs those who resort to Him through the text 'That thou art', to Him by realizing whom there will be no more falls into the ocean of rebirth; to Him who is the refuge of the ascetics, the Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him who is luminous like the light of a lamp in a pot with many holes; to Him whose knowledge externalises through the eye and other sense organs: to Him who is effulgent as 'I know', and the entrire universe shines after him: to Him the unmoving Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

They who know the 'I' as body, breath, senses, intellect or the void, are deluded like women and children, and the blind and stupid, and talk much. To Him who destroys the great delusion produced by ignorance; to Him who removes the obstacles to knowledge, to the Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him, who sleeps when the manifested mind gets resolved, on account of the veiling by Maya, like the sun or the moon in eclipse, and on waking recognizes self existence in the form 'I have slept till now', to Him the Guru of all that moves and moves not, Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him, who, by means of the *mudra* indicating illumination, manifests to his devotees his own Self that for ever shines within as 'I' constantly, in all the inconstant states such as infancy, etc. and waking, etc.—to him whose eye is of the form of the fire of knowledge, the Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To the self who, deluded by Maya, sees in dreaming and waking the universe in its distinctions such as cause and effect, master and servant, disciple and teacher, and father

and son, to Him, the Guru of the world, Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him whose eightfold form is all this moving and unmoving universe, appearing as earth, water, fire, air, ether, the sun, the moon, and the soul; beyond whom, supreme and all-pervading, there exists naught else for those who enquire—to Him the gracious Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

Since, in this Hymn, the all-self-hood has thus been explained, by listening to it, by reflecting on its meaning, by meditating on it, there will come about lordship together with the supreme splendour consisting of all-self-hood; thence will be achieved, again, the unimpeded supernormal power presenting itself in eight forms.

References

[2]There are many traiditional *mudras* or postures of the hands which are used in Indian dancing and iconography, each of which has its own meaning. In the October 1966 issue of *The Mountain Path* there is an article: *The Language of the Mudras in Indian Classical Dancing*, by Gita Sharma.

[3]'Father' because he is the universal father, or, the supreme father of all.

[4]The Supreme Guru is the spiritual north pole and therefore traditionally faces south.

SRI RUDRAM

(Hymn to Rudra)

Invocation

We invoke Thee that art the leader of the hosts of celestial beings and bearest the name of Ganapati. Thou art the poet of poets, of unsurpassed fame, the foremost among the shining ones, Lord of the Vedas: Pray listen to our prayer and graciously occupy the place kept for Thee.

Grant me (the devotee of Rudra) the joys and pleasures of this world and the higher world, the desire for them, the fulfilment of that desire, relations who are well-disposed to me, auspiciousness, prosperity, a good place to live in, fame, good fortune, riches, a director, a supporter, welfare, steadfastness, the good will of all, honour, knowledge, intelligence, ability to teach, control over sons and servants, ploughs, freedom from (chronic diseases like) consumption, freedom from acute diseases (like fever), medicines, long life, absence of enemies, fearlessness, good conduct, a good bed, a good morning and a good day.

Om Peace! Om Peace! Om Peace!

NAMAKAM

Section I

Om Prostrations to Bhagavan Rudra!

1. O Rudra! Prostrations to Thy anger, Thy arrow, Thy bow and Thy two arms.

2. O Rudra! Make us rejoice with Thy auspicious (gentle) bow and arrows and Thy quiver.

3. O Rudra! Girisantha (He who dwells on the mountain and does good to all beings)! With Thy body which is gentle, auspicious, brings about the state of sinlessness and bestows the highest state, enlighten us.

4. O Girisantha! Girithra (He who dwells on the mountain and protects all beings)! Make the arrow which Thou bearest in Thy hand auspicious (gentle). Do not oppress our men or the world.

5. Girisa! (Dweller on the mountain): We praise Thee that art stainless with auspicious words so that all our men and cattle may remain free from illness and friendly to one another.

6. May that Primal Being, the Protector of the celestial beings, the Physician (who cures the ills of the world), He whose words cannot be gainsaid, destroy all serpents and demons and speak on our behalf.

7. This (sun) who is now copper-coloured, now crimson, now golden coloured and so pleasant to look at, is He (Rudra described in the previous verses). We adore the thousands of Rudras who inhabit all the quarters (of the world) so that their anger may be pacified.

8. The cowherds see the ruddy and blue-throated one who rises (as the Sun). Women bringing water and all other beings likewise see Him. May He who is thus seen make us rejoice!

9. Prostrations to the blue-throated one, the thousand-eyed god who showers (blessings on men). We salute also his attendant gods.

10. Untie the bowstring tied to the two ends of Thy bow, Bhagavan! Turn the arrows in Thy hand away from us.

11. O Thousand-eyed God! God with a hundred quivers! Unstring Thy bow and keep Thy arrows face downwards (in the quiver). Be auspicious and friendly to us!

12. May the bow of Kapardin (the god with the matted locks) be unstringed! May his quiver become arrowless. May his arrows become harmless. May his scabbard become immovable.

13. Noble grantor of wishes! Protect us from all evils with the sword and the bow in Thy hands made harmless.

14. Prostrations to Thy firm but unready weapon. Prostrations to Thy two hands and Thy bow.

15. May the arrow of Thy bow turn aside without wounding us anywhere. Lay aside Thy quiver at a distane from us.

Section II

Prostrations to Thee. Bhagavan, Visvesvara (Lord of the Universe), Mahadeva (the great god), Tryambaka (the three-eyed god), Tripuranthaka (the destroyer of the three cities), Trikalagnikala (the destroyer of the three

fires), Kalagni Rudra (Rudra who is like the fire which finally destroys the world), Neelakantha (the blue-throated god), Mrityunjaya (the conqueror of death), Sarveswara (the Lord of all), the Eternal Siva!

Repeated prostrations to the golden armed god, the commander of armies, the Lord of the quarters.

Repeated prostrations to the Lord who is in the form of trees crowned with green leaves, the Lord of living beings.

Repeated prostrations to the god with the complexion of tender grass, the resplendent one, the Lord of the paths (like the path of the gods and the path of the manes).

Repeated prostrations to the rider of the bull, the smiter of enemies, the Lord of food.

Repeated prostrations to the god of the black locks, the wearer of the sacred thread, the foremost among those who are virtuous.

Repeated prostrations to the Lord who is an axe for cutting down (the tree of) Samsara, the Lord of the world.

Repeated prostrations to the remover of distress, the protector of the world with the strong bow, the Lord of the fields.

Repeated prostrations to the invincible charioteer, the Lord of forests.

Repeated prostrations to the red-complexioned god, the creator and protector of all, the Lord of trees.

Repeated prostrations to the minister, the trader and the Lord of the thickets.

Repeated prostrations to the conqueror of other lands, the producer and destroyer of wealth, the Lord of herbs.

Repeated prostrations to the loudly-sounding one, the god who makes enemies weep aloud, the lord of soldiers on foot.

Repeated prostrations to the god who chases the foes (or runs to the succour of his devotees), the Lord of virtuous souls.

Section III

Repeated prostrations to the subduer of foes, the smiter of foes, foremost among those who smite their foes.

Repeated prostrations to the exalted one, the wearer of the sword.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who bear arms and those who bear bows.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who string their bows and those who place arrows on their bows.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who pull the bow string and those who shoot arrows.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who shoot at targets, and those who split the targets.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who are seated and those who are lying down.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who are asleep and those who are awake.

Repated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who are standing and those who are running.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who are in assemblies and those who are the heads of assemblies.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as horses and as riders of horses.

Section IV

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as the powerful Ganas (like the Seven Mothers) and the terrific goddesses (like Durga).

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as an assembly of various communities and their leader.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as the Ganas (divine attendants) and their leader.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as shapely and unshapely beings.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as great men and also as men of mean abilities.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who ride in chariots and those without chariots.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as chariots of inferior and the most superior quality among them.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as armies and their leaders.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as charioteers and those who hold the reins properly (in the right manner).

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as carpenters and chariot-makers.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as potters and blacksmiths.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as hunters who catch birds in nets and as fishermen.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as makers of arrows and as makers of bows.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as hunters of animals and as those who lead dogs.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as dogs and as those who keep dogs.

Section V

Prostrations to the Originator of the Universe and the Remover of life's sorrows.

Prostrations to the destroyer of sins and the Lord of beings.

Prostrations to the blue-throated one and the white-throated (ash-smeared) one.

Prostrations to the one with the matted locks and the one with the fully shaved head.

Prostrations to the thousand-eyed one and the one with the hundred bows.

Prostrations to the dweller on the mountains and the one who is in the form of the all-pervading Vishnu.

Prostrations to the one in the form of the rain clouds and the one who bears arrows.

Prostrations to the short one and one who is in the form of a dwarf.

Prostrations to the one of gigantic stature and the one who is the repository of virtues.

Prostrations to the ancient one and the one who is renowned.

Prostrations to the primordial one and the foremost one.

Prostrations to the omnipresent one and the fast moving one.

Prostrations to the dweller in the swift streams and the dweller in the floods.

Prostrations to the dweller in the waves and the dweller in still waters.

Prostrations to the dweller in brooks and the dweller on islands.

Prostrations to one who is the elder and one who is the younger.

Section VI

Prostrations to the first born (*Hiranyagarbha*) and the last born (the world-destroying fire).

Prostrations to the middle-aged one and the youthful one.

Prostrations to the one who is born from the hind portion (of animals) and the one who appears as the roots of trees.

Prostrations to the one born as human beings and the one born as other beings.

Prostrations to the one born in the world of Yama (the god of death) and the one born in the heavenly world (*svarga*).

Prostrations to the dweller in the field of crops and the dweller on the threshing floor.

Prostrations to the one who is praised by the Vedas and the one who is the end of the Vedas.

Prostrations to the one in the shape of forest trees and the one who is in the form of plants and creepers in thickets.

Prostrations to the one in the form of sound and the one in the form of the echo.

Prostrations to the one in the form of fast moving armies and the one in the form of fast chariots.

Prostrations to the brave one and the one who punishes the wicked.

Prostrations to the one who wears the armour and the one whose chariot has a specially protected part in it.

Prostrations to the one who wears a head dress and the one who is protected by a charm.

Prostrations to the renowned one and the one whose army is renowned.

Section VII

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the drum as well as the drum-beat.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the brave warrior who does not run away from the battlefield as well as the warrior who is aware of the tactics of the enemy.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the messenger as well as the servitor.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the swordsman as well as the one who bears a quiver.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the possessor of sharp arrows as well as the wielder of several weapons.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the possessor of excellent weapons as well as the possessor of an excellent bow.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the traveller on narrow pathways as well as the one who travels on good roads.

Prostrations to Thee that livest in the water of the rivulet as well as the water of the cataract.

Prostrations to Thee that livest in the water of the muddy pond as well as the water of the lake.

Prostrations to Thee that livest in the water of the river as well as the water of the pool.

Prostrations to Thee that livest in the water of the well as well as in the water of the pit.

Prostrations to Thee who art the rain as well as the drought.

Prostrations to Thee that art in the clouds as well as the lightning.

Prostrations to Thee that art in the white autumn cloud as well as the hot sun.

Prostrations to Thee that art in the wind which brings rain as well as hailstorms.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the household articles as well as the guardian of the house.

Section VIII

Prostrations to Thee that art accompanied by Uma and art the remover of sorrows.

Prostrations to Thee that art in the red rays of the rising sun as well as the reddish rays of the risen sun.

Prostrations to Thee that conferrest joy on all beings and art also the protector of the virtuous.

Prostrations to Thee that art stern towards Thine enemies and also the terrible one.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the slayer of enemies near and far.

Prostrations to Thee that art the slayer as well as the destroyer.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the trees crowned with green leaves.

Prostrations to Thee that art the *Pranava* (*OM*).

Prostrations to Thee that art the source of worldly pleasures as well as the bliss of Liberation.

Prostrations to Thee that bestowest the joys of this world as well as the bliss of Liberation.

Prostrations to Thee that art auspicious of form and art also most auspicious.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the holy waters as well as the gods installed on the banks of rivers.

Prostrations to Thee that hast crossed the sea of *samsara* as well as one who has not.

Prostrations to Thee that art the *japa* (repetition of *mantras*) etc., which destroys sins as well as the spiritual knowledge which liberates one from *samsara*.

Prostrations to Thee that promptest individuals to do worldly acts which keep them in *samsara* and to enjoy the fruit of those acts.

Prostrations to Thee that livest in the midst of the tender grass on the banks of the rivers as well as the foam in the water of the rivers.

Prostrations to Thee that livest in the sandy embankments of rivers as well as their flowing water.

Section IX

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who live in rough tracts and also as those who travel over a well-trodden path.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who live in arid tracts as well as those who live in fertile plains.

Prostrations to Thee that wearest matted locks and comest forward to protect Thy devotees.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who live in cattle sheds as well as those who live in houses.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who lie on the bare ground as well as those who live in homes.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who live in inaccessible forests as well as those who live in caves.

Prostrations to Thee that dwellest in deep pools as well as in the dew drop.

Prostrations to Thee that dwellest in invisible particles as well as visible particles of dust.

Prostrations to Thee that art in the dry firewood as well as in the living tree.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who live in desert lands as well as those who live in meadows.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who live in large tracks of lands as well as those who live near rivers enhanced by waves.

Prostrations to Thee that art in the green leaves as well as the dry leaves.

Prostrations to Thee that appearest as the one who has taken up a weapon as well as the one who smites enemies.

Prostrations to Thee that tormentest others slightly as well as much.

Prostrations to Thee that assumest the forms of gods who grant riches to their worshippers and livest in the hearts of all the gods.

Prostrations to Thee dwelling eternally in the hearts of all the gods.

Prostrations to Thee in the forms of gods who fulfil the desires of aspirants.

Prostrations to Thee in the forms of gods who completely destroy sins.

Prostrations to Thee in the forms of gods who wander about as groups of Rudras.

Section X

Thou that punishest sinners! Thou that providest food for Thy devotees! Thou that appearest as a pauper! Thou that hast a blue throat and a ruddy complexion! Do not frighten these men and these cows. Do not let them die. Let not any one of them become ill.

O Rudra! Make our lives blessed with Thy auspicious form which is the great medicament for all ills as well as the means of attaining union with Thee.

Let us always keep in mind the thought of Rudra, the ascetic with the matted locks, the destroyer of foes, in order that all our men and animals in this village may fare well and flourish without sickness.

O Rudra! We prostrate to Thee. Make us happy. Bestow upon us the joy of Liberation. With prostration we worship Thee that destroyest our sins. May we attain the happiness and freedom from misery which Manu, the Father (of the world), attained by Thy grace.

O Rudra! Do no harm (*lit.* kill) to our elders and children, nor to our young men nor to yet unborn children, nor to our fathers and mothers. Do no harm to our precious bodies. Do no harm to our infant sons. Do not cut short

our lives. Do no harm to our cows and horses. Do not in Thy anger slay our warriors. We shall bring offering to Thee and worship Thee.

O God! Keep away Thy (terrible) form which is death to men and animals and warriors. Show us Thy gracious form. Protect us. Speak words of comfort to us. Give us the joys of this world and the next.

O Mind! praise Rudra who dwells in the heart ever youthful, terrible in destroying enemies, awe-inspiring like a lion.

O Rudra! Whom we praise ! Be gracious to us embodied beings. Let Thy hosts destroy our enemies.

Let Rudra's weapons pass by harmlessly. Let his harsh and angry thoughts directed towards sinners pass by harmlessly.

Granter of boons! Bear with us who worship Thee and restain Thy terrific aspect which destroys enemies. Make our children and our children's children happy.

Supreme Granter of Boons! Auspiciousness itself! Be Thou well disposed to us and do good to us. Come to us wearing a tiger skin leaving Thy weapon high up on a tree. Come to us adorned only with Thy bow, Pinaka.

Oh Bhagavan! Munificent dispenser of riches! O god of radiant hue! We bow to Thee, Let Thy thousands of weapons destroy our enemies.

Innumerable weapons in thousands in Thy hands, O Thou All powerful, turn their edges away from us and render them harmless.

Section XI

We beseech the thousands of Rudras of various shapes who are on earth to leave their bows unstrung thousands of leagues (*yojanas*) away.

The Rudras who live in this big ocean and the sky, those with throats partly blue and partly white who live in the nether world, those with throats partly blue and partly white who live in heaven, those with throats blue and red who live on trees and resemble the tender grass, those who are leaders of *bhutas* (Siva's hosts) and wear matted locks or no locks at all, those, who abiding in food or utensils, create trouble for those who eat and drink, those who protect travellers on their way, those who supply food, those who fight with enemies, those who roam about the sacred waters with sharp swords, all these and others in the form of Rudras spread over all the quarters, we beseech to leave their bows unstrung a thousand leagues away.

Prostrations to Rudras who are on earth, in the sky and in heaven, to whom food, wind and rain are like arrows; I prostrate to them with the ten fingers brought together to the east, to the south, to the west, to the north and towards the sky. Let them make us happy. I shall throw into your open mouths those whom we hate and those who hate us.

Supplementary Verses

We worship the three-eyed God, the fragrant one who enhances the prosperity (of his devotees). May we be released, like a ripe cucumber from its stalk, from death, not immortality.

Prostrations to Rudra who is in fire, water, and herbs, and penetrates the entire universe.

Do thou praise Rudra who possesses an excellent bow and splendid arrows and who is the storehouse of all medications for the ills of the world. We worship Rudra who destroys demons (*asuras*) and prostrate before Him in order to achieve purity of mind.

This hand of mine is Bhagavan (God). This is more than God to me. This is my medication for all ills. For it is this which touches God (while worshipping).

O Death! We pray that the thousands and tens of thousands of ropes kept by Thee for binding (*lit.* destroying) men, may, by the virtue of our worship, leave us untouched We offer this oblation to Death. We offer this oblation to Death.

Prostrations to Bhagavan Rudra the all-pervasive God. Save me from death, O Rudra! Thou art the controller of the vital forces. O Destroyer! Enter into me and accept this food (I eat).

OM PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!

CHAMAKAM

Section I

O AGNI and Vishnu! Be gracious to me. May I praise you more and more. Come with food and riches.

Let me not lack food. Let orders be issued to serve me food. Let the food be pure. Let my appetite be good. Let me accept the food. Let me perform sacrifices. Let me chant with the proper intonation. Let me chant hymns of praise. Let my exposition be skilful. Let me appreciate skilful exposition by others. May I be enlightened. May I attain heaven. Let the upward breath, the downward breath and the breath which pervades my body function properly. Let the vital force function properly. Let my perceptive faculty be good. Let my speech, mind, eyes and ears be unimpaired. Let my organs of knowledge and action be unimpaired. Let my vital energy be unimpaired. Let me have the power to quell my enemies. Let me live long. Let me live to a ripe old age. May I realize the Self. Let my body be healthy. May I be happy. Let me possess bodily armour. Let my limbs be whole and sturdy. Let my bones and joints be strong. Let all the organs in my body be healthy.

Section II

May I be distinguished in every way. May I be a chief of men. Let me feel righteous anger. Let me display my anger when required. Let my thoughts be inscrutable. Let me have plenty of pure, cool water. Let me always be victorious. Let me enjoy the fruits of victory. Let me be honoured by others. Let me acquire houses, lands etc. Let me have healthy sons and grandsons. Let my progeny

increase. May I be rich. May I be distinguished by my learning. Let me speak truth always. Let me have faith. Let me possess movable and immovable property. Let me be affluent. Let me attract others and bring them under my power. Let my body be attractive. Let me engage in games, dances etc. and enjoy the pleasure arising from them. Let the children already born to me live long. Let the children that may be born hereafter live long. Let me chant the hymns praising gods and acquire merit thereby. Let the wealth already acquired by me and that which may be acquired by me be secure. Let the place where I and my relatives live be easily accessible. Let the path leading to it be safe. Let me reap the reward of the religious rites already performed by me and the rites which may be performed hereafter. Let me acquire wealth by proper means. Let me be efficient. Let my power of understanding ordinary matters as well as the highest truth be good.

Section III

May I be happy in this world and the next. May I possess desirable objects. May I desire to possess them. Let my desires be fulfilled. Let me have loving relatives. Let me possess auspicious objects. Let me possess spiritial blessing. Let me possess a suitable place of residence. May I acquire fame. May I be lucky. May I acquire wealth. May I have a preceptor to guide me. May I have paternal support. May I have the ability to protect my possessions. May I never be perturbed. Let me be friendly to all (or possess the goodwill of all). May I be honoured by others. May I be learned in the scriptures. May I possess the ability to teach. May I possess the ability to extract work from my sons, servants etc. May I possess ploughs and other agricultural implements and the ability to maintain them

properly. May I perform religious works like sacrifices and enjoy their fruit. Let me be free from chronic diseases like consumption and acute diseases like fever. May I always possess suitable medicines. May I live long. May none be my enemy. May I be free from fear. May my conduct be always proper. May I have a good night. May I have a good dawn and a good day.

Section IV

May I have food in plenty. May my words be pleasing. May I have milk, cream, ghee and honey in plenty. May I have opportunities to eat and drink with my relatives. May I cultivate my lands. May there be rain. May my lands be fertile. May my trees and plants grow well. May I possess gold, precious stones, pearls etc., in plenty. May I be strong physically. May I have plenty of grains. May I have more and more of them. May I have them always. May I grow less important grains (like millets) as well as the more important grains (like wheat and rice). May I never go hungry. May I grow rice, barley, black gram, sesame, green gram, peas, wheat, red gram, wild rice, fine rice, *sama* rice and red rice.

Section V

May I have stones, earth, hills, mountains, sand, trees, gold, iron, lead, zinc, rock salt, copper and other metals, fire, water, plants, herbs, cultivated crops, crops growing wild, domestic and wild animals suitable for sacrifice. Let the wealth already acquired by me as well as that which may be acquired hereafter be secure. May I and my sons and relatives be prosperous. May I possess movable and immovable property. May I perform religious works. May I

be efficient. May I gain the reward of my acts. May I be happy. May I know how to attain happiness. May I attain happiness.

Section VI

May the gods Agni, Soma, Savita, Sarasvati, Pusha, Brihaspati, Mitra, Varuna, Thvashta, Dhata, Vishnu, the Asvins, the Maruts, Visvedevas, Prithvi, Antariksham, Dhyau, Diks, Moordha and Prajapati be auspicious to me. May Indra (to whom offerings are made during sacrifices along with each of these gods) be also auspicious to me.

Section VII

May I possess sacred vessels[1] named Amsu, Rashmi, Adabhya, Adhipati, Upamsu. Antaryama, Aindravayava, Maitravaruna, Asvina, Pratiprasthana, Sukra, Manthi, Agrayana, Vaisvadeva, Dhruva, Vaisvanara, Ritugraha, Atigrahya Aindragna, Vaisvadeva, Madutvatiya, Mahendra, Aditya, Savitra, Sarasvata, Paushna, Patnivata and Hariyojana.

Section VIII[2]

May I posses the sacred twigs, the sacred grass, the sacrificial altar, the platforms for the sacrificing priests, the ladles for pouring the offerings, the vessels for keeping the *soma* juice, the stones for pounding the *soma* creeper, the chips fallen while shaping the sacrificial post, the pits dug in the earth, the planks used for pressing out the *soma* juice, the pots called *drona*, *vayavya*, *bhootabrit* and *adhavaniya*, the raised platform called Agnidhra, the platform for keeping the sacrificial offerings (*havirdhana*), the pavilions for ladies (*griha*) the pavilions for the public (*sadas*), the offering named

purodosa made of broken rice, and the sacrificial blocks called *pachatas*; May I have the sacred bath at the close of the sacrifice (*avabhrita*) and burn the sacred fuel (*svagakara*).

Section IX

May I light the sacrificial fire. May I perform the religious rite known as Gharma and the sacrifices known as Arka and Surya. May I make the offerings due to Prana. May I perform the horse-sacrifice (*Asvamedha*). May the gods Prithvi, Aditi, Diti and Dyaus be auspicious to me. May the poetic metre known as Sakvari be properly recited. May the fingers (parts of the Cosmic Person) and the directions of space be suitable for my sacrifice. May the Rig Veda, the Sama Veda, the Yajur Veda, and the hymn known as Stoma be properly chanted at my sacrifice. May austerities be practised by me properly. May the seasons be favourable for my sacrifice. May I practise the bodily austerities (like fasting at night).

May my crops flourish with rain falling night and day. May the chants called Brihat and Rathantara be properly chanted at my sacrifice.

Section X

May I by virtue of my sacrifice possess calves not yet dropped, calves which have been dropped, calves less than a year old, a year and half old bull calves, a year and a half old heifers, two year old abull calves, two year old heifers, two and a half year old bull calves, two and a half year old heifers, three year old bull calves, three year old heifers, three and a half year old bull calves, three and a half year old heifers, four year old bull calves, four year old heifers, stud bulls, barren cows, fully grown bulls, cows which have had a

miscarriage, draught bulls and milch cows. May I live long. May my upward breath, downward breath, equalising breath, eyes, ears, mind, speech and body function properly as a result of my sacrifice. May I perform more sacrifices as a result of this sacrifice.

Section XI

May I be endowed with one,[3] three, five, seven, nine, eleven, thirteen, fifteen, seventeen, nineteen, twentyone, twenty three, twentyfive, twentyseven, twentynine, thirtyone and thirtythree as also four, eight, twelve, sixteen, twenty, twentyfour, twentyeight, thirtytwo, thirtysix, forty, fortyfour and fortyeight. May I possess food. May it be produced in plenty. May it be produced again and again. May I perform sacrifices. May the Sun, the ether, that came out of it, that appeared last, that appeared in the world, the world and the king be auspicious to me.

Ida invokes the gods, Manu performs sacrifices, Brihaspati chants mantras which produce joy. Visvedevas recite hymns. O Mother Prithvi (Earth) do no injury to me. I shall entertain sweet thoughts, do sweet deeds, make sweet offerings, speak sweet words, and speak honeyed words to the gods and attentive men. May the gods make them faultless. May they be approved by the *pitrs* (manes of ancestors).

Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

References

[1]The vessels mentioned in this section are used for keeping the *soma* juice to be offered to the various gods at Vedic sacrifices.

[2]This section describes the various requisites of a Vedic sacrifice.

[3]The odd numbers one, three, five etc. are pleasing to the gods who number thirty-three (crores) while the even numbers like four, eight, etc., are pleasing to the beings on earth.

The numbers are sometimes interpreted as follows: 1 represents *prakriti* (nature), 3 the three *gunas* or modalities, 5 the five elements, 7 the seven organs, of knowledge (along with the mind and the intellect), 9 the body with its nine openings, 11 the ten vital airs and the *sushumna nadi* upon which they depend, 13 the *devatas*, 15 the *nadis*, 17 the organ, of the subtle body, 19 the medicinal herbs, 21 the vital parts of the body, 23 the deities who cause serious diseases, 25 the divine damsels in the body, 27 the *gandharvas*, 29 the *devas* in the lightning, 31 the worlds and 33 the *devas*. 4 represents the goals of human life, 8 the Vedas and Upavedas 12 the six angas and six sastras, 16 the siddhis, 20 the elements, the senses, the physical and subtle bodies, 24 the syllables of the Gayatri metre, 28 the metre called *ushnik*, 32 the metre known as *anushtup*, 36 the metre known as *brihati*, 40 the metre known as *paukti*, 44 the metre known as *trishtub* and 48 the metre known as *jagati*.

PURUSHA SOOKTAM

Hymn to the Supreme Being

1. The Purusha (*lit.* person, the Supreme Being) who has thousands of heads, thousands of eyes and thousands of feet enveloped the earth on all sides and stood beyond it in the ten directions[1] of space.

2. All this is the Purusha only; all that has been and all that will be. And He is the Lord of Immortality which (also) grows by food.

3. Such is His greatness, but the Purusha is greater than this. All beings make up only one-quarter of Him. Three-quarters of Him which are immortal are in heaven.

4. Three-quarters of the Purusha ascended high; one-quarter was here, again and again[2]. And, diversified in form, it moved to the animate and inanimate world.

5. From That was born Virat (the totality of beings). From Virat was the Purusha born. As soon as He was born, He spread over the earth both in front and behind.

6. When the devas (gods) performed a sacrifice with the Purusha as the offering, the season of spring was the molten butter (used in all sacrifices), summer the sacred fuel and autumn the oblation.

7. When the devas performed the sacrifice, in which they bound the Purusha as the sacrificial animal, there were seven (poles) in the sacrificial enclosure and three times seven logs of sacred firewood.

8. They placed Him, the Sacrifice, Purusha, the first-born, on the sacrificial grass and besprinkled Him (with the sacred water). Then the devas, the sadhyas and the rishis performed the sacrifice with Him (as the offering).

9. From that sacrifice, in which everything was offered as an oblation, was collected fresh butter. Creatures living in air (birds) and those living in forests and villages came into being.

10. From that sacrifice, in which everything was offered as oblation, came the Riks (Vedic hymns) and the Samans (hymns which are sung). The Chandases (Vedic metres) came from it; and from it the Yajus (mantra for the ritual) was born.

11. Horses were born of it, and animals with two rows of teeth. Cows were born of it, and so were goats and sheep.

12. When they cut up the Purusha, into how many parts did they divide Him? What did they call His mouth, His two arms, His two thighs and His two feet?

13. The Brahmana was His mouth, the two arms became the Kshatriya, and his two thighs became the Vaisya. Of His two feet was the Sudra born.

14. The moon was born of His mind. The sun was born of His two eyes. Indra and Agni were born of His mouth. Vayu was born of His prana (life-breath).

15. The antariksha (the middle region) came from His navel. The sky appeared out of the head, the earth from the two feet and the quarters from the two ears. Thus they created the worlds.

16. I know that great Purusha, lustrous as the sun beyond darkness. The Wise One, having made all the forms appear, gave them names, and uttered these as they were.

17. One who knows Him whom Dhata (Creator) first revealed, and so did Sakra (Indra) who fully knew the four quarters, becomes immortal here. There is no other way.

18. The devas performed sacrifice with the Sacrifice.[3] These were the first dharmas. They, the mighty ones, attained the height of heaven where the ancient sadhyas and devas abide.

References

[1]*lit.* 'fingers'.
[2]*lit.*—came into existence again.
[3]i.e., Purusha.

NARAYANA SOOKTAM

1-2. (I worship) the Lord who has thousands of heads, and thousands of eyes, who is the source of happiness in the world, the eternal, Hari. All this is nothing but the Purusha. All this lives by Him.

3. (I worship) Him who is the Self and the Lord of the Universe, the Eternal Isvara, the benign and undecaying Narayana, the Supreme Being who is to be known, the Self of all, the Supreme Goal.

4. Narayana is the Supreme Brahman, Narayana is the Supreme Reality, Narayana is the Supreme Light, Narayana is the Supreme Self, Narayana is the Supreme Meditator, Narayana is the Supreme (Object of) Meditation.

5. Narayana abides pervading whatever is seen or heard in this universe, whatever is within and without.

6. (I worship or meditate upon) the Infinite and immutable Seer who is the other end of the ocean (of samsara) and the source of all happiness.

The (*Hridayam*) (the heart which is the place of meditation) resembles an inverted lotus bud.

7. A span below the throat and above the navel there burns a fire from which flames are rising up. That is the great support (basis) of the Universe.

8. It always hangs down from the arteries like a lotus bud. In the middle of it there is a tiny orifice in which all are firmly supported.

9. In the middle of it there is a great fire with innumerable flames blazing on all sides which first consumes the food and then distributes it to all parts of the body. It is the immutable and all-knowing.

10. Its rays constantly shoot upwards and downwards. It heats the body from head to foot. In the middle of it there is a tongue of fire which is extremely small.

11. It is dazzling as a streak of lightning in the midst of a dark cloud and as thin as the awn at the tip of a grain of rice, golden bright and extremely minute.

12. In the middle of that tongue of flame the Supreme Self abides firmly. He is Brahma, He is Siva, He is Hari (Vishnu), He is Indra, He is the Immortal, the Supreme Lord of all.

13. I bow down again and again to the Eternal Law, the Truth, the Supreme Brahman, the Purusha who is dark blue and reddish, the pure celibate, with extraordinary eyes who has assumed all forms.

14. We shall try to know Narayana, we shall contemplate on Vasudeva, let Vishnu be pleased to guide us.

15. Lo! I proclaim the valorous deeds of Vishnu. He penetrated[4] even the tiniest particles of dust composing the earth. He made the world of the devas stand in the heavens steadily and perpetually. He covered the three worlds in three strides. His glories are sung by great sages.

Thou art[5] the forehead of Vishnu, Thou art the back of Vishnu. Thou art established in the mouth of Vishnu. Thou art the penetrating power[6] of Vishnu. Thou art the firm

abode of Vishnu. Thou belongest to Vishnu. Obesiance to Thee that art Vishnu.

OM PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!

References

[4]*lit.* 'counted.'

[5]i.e., 'representest.' These and the lines that follow are supposed to be addressed to the rope of *darbha* grass strung across the entrance to a sacrificial hall, or the cross pole under it.

[6]*lit.* thread.

DURGA SOOKTAM

Hymn to Goddess Durga

1. We shall press out the soma juice to Jatavedas (Deva Agni). May the all-knowing annihilate[1] our enemies. May Agni protect us against all obstacles and evils (and take us across them like a boatman who takes people across the river in a boat).

2. I take refuge in that Goddess Durga who is of the colour of fire, who blazes with her *tapas* (spiritual fire), who is the consort of Virochana (the Supreme Being) and who is the bestower of the fruit of actions. Obeisance to Thee who art skilled in ferrying (people across the river of the world). Be pleased to ferry us across.

3. O Agni, Who art worthy of praise, take us across all obstacles by ways that are safe. May our town and our lands expand. Make our children happy.

4. Thou Jatavedas, who art the remover of obstacles, take us beyond all evil like the boatman who ferries people across a river. O Agni, may you be a careful protector of our bodies like Atri who is always concerned with the welfare. (of all beings)

5. Let us invoke, from the highest places, Agni the vanquisher of enemy hosts, who is powerful and invincible. May that Agni protect us against all obstacles and evils.

6. O Agni, praised in sacrifices, thou increasest bliss. Thou art the ancient and the new invoker at sacrifices. O Agni, make Thyself happy and grant us prosperity.

7. O Indra, all-pervading! we shall follow thee blessed with cattle and unbroken happiness. May those who live on the heights of heaven bring here the world of Vishnu.

8. We shall try to know Katyayani, we shall engage in contemplation on Kanyakumari, may Durga be pleased to guide us.

References

[1]*lit.* burn up.

PASSAGES FROM THE TAITTIRIYA ARANYAKA

O Indra, the possessor of a thousand eyes! Come accompanied by the year (*samvatsara*) with its varying colours and the bright and different seasons which are Thy horses. Fire (Agni) who is clothed in dazzling raiment (i.e., lightning and the wind (Vayu) who makes the white sands fly before him are Thy constant followers! O God who is glorified by the Vedas (Subrahmanya)! O God glorified by the Vedas! O God glorified by the Vedas.

OM That is Brahman. OM That is Vayu. OM That is the Self (Atman). OM That is the Truth. OM That is all this. OM the three bodies (physical, subtle and causal) are That. Salutations to That.

The Supreme Being whose symbol is OM moves about in the (heart) cave of all beings. Thou art the sacrifice. Thou art the *mantra* with which the oblations are made (*Vashatkara*). Thou art Indra. Thou art Rudra. Thou art Vishnu (the sustainer of the world). Thou art Brahma (the Creator). Thou art the lord of beings (Prajapati). Thou art the waters (of rivers, seas etc.). Thou art the taste (such as sweet and sour). Thou art the nectar (drunk by devas). Everything is Brahman of which OM is the symbol. The three worlds Bhuh, Bhuvah and Svah are also Brahman.

UPADESA SARAM[1]

The Essence of Instruction

Action yields fruit,
For so the Lord ordains it.
How can action be the Lord?
It is insentient.

The fruit of action passes,
But action leaves behind
Seed of further action
Leading to an endless ocean of action;
Not at all to *moksha*.

Disinterested action
Surrendered to the Lord
Purifies the mind and points
The way to *moksha*

This is certain;
Worship, praise and meditation,
Being work of body, speech and mind,
Are steps for orderly ascent.

Ether, fire, air, water, earth,
Sun, moon, and living beings
Worship of those,
Regarded all as forms of His,
Is perfect worship of the Lord.

Better than hymns of praise
Is repetition of the Name;
Better low-voiced than loud;
But best of all
Is meditation in the mind.

Better than spells of meditation
Is one continuous current,
Steady as a stream,
Or downward flow of oil.

Better than viewing Him as Other,
Indeed the noblest attitude of all,
Is to hold Him as the 'I' within,
The very 'I'.

Abidance in pure being
Transcending thought through love intense
Is the very essence
Of supreme devotion.

Absorption in the heart of being,
Whence we sprang,
Is the path of action, of devotion,
Of union and of knowledge.

Holding the breath controls the mind,
A bird caught in a net.
Breath-regulation helps
Absorption in the heart.

Mind and breath (as thought and action)
Fork out like two branches.
But both spring
From a single root.

Absorption is of two sorts;
Submergence and destruction.
Mind submerged rises again;
Dead, it revives no more.

Breath controlled and thought restrained,
The mind turned one-way inward
Fades and dies.

Mind extinct, the mighty seer
Returns to his own natural being
And has no action to perform.

It is true wisdom
For the mind to turn away
From outer objects and behold
Its own effulgent form.

When unceasingly the mind
Scans its own form
There is nothing of the kind.
For every one
This path direct is open.

Thoughts alone make up the mind;
And of all thoughts the 'I' thought is the root
What is called mind is but the notion 'I'.

When one turns within and searches
Whence this 'I' thought arises,
The shamed 'I' vanishes—
And wisdom's quest begins.

Where this 'I' notion faded
Now there as I, as I, arises
The One, the very Self,
The infinite.

Of the term 'I', the permanent import
Is That. For even in deep sleep
Where we have no sense of 'I'
We do not cease to be.

Body, senses, mind, breath, sleep—
All insentient and unreal—
Cannot be 'I',
'I' who am the Real.

For knowing That which Is
There is no other knower.
Hence Being is Awareness;
And we are all Awareness.

In the nature of their being creature and creator
Are in substance one.
They differ only
In adjuncts and awareness.

Seeing oneself free of all attributes
Is to see the Lord,
For He shines ever as the pure Self.

To know the Self is but to be the Self,
For It is non-dual
In such knowledge
One abides as That.

That is true knowledge which transcends
Both knowledge and ignorance,
For in pure knowledge
Is no object to be known.

Having known one's nature one abides
As being with no beginning and no end
In unbroken consciousness and bliss.

Abiding in this state of bliss
Beyond bondage and release,
Is steadfastness
In service of the Lord.

All ego gone,
Living as That alone
Is penance good for growth,
Sings Ramana, the Self.

Na karmana....

Deathlessness is not obtained through action or begetting offspring or wealth. Some attain that state through renunciation.

The Sages (that have conquered the senses) attain that *Sat* which is more supreme than Heaven and shining all alone in the Heart.

The adepts who by renunciation and one-pointedness are pure in heart and have known the certainty of Truth by the special knowledge proclaimed by Vedanta, get fully released in the *Brahmaloka* from the causal *Maya* at the dissolution of the body.

That alone which shines as the tiny *Akasa* void of sorrow, in the lotus heart, the tiny seat of the spotless Supreme in the (inner) core of the body is worthy of worship.

He alone is the Supreme Lord, who is beyond the Primal Word which is the beginning and end of the Veda and in which merges the creative Cause.